

NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Education

EDUCATION MINISTER HONOURS LOCAL TEACHERS

NORTH VANCOUVER – North Vancouver teacher Briar Ballou and West Vancouver teacher Maryam Moayeri joined Education Minister Shirley Bond in the legislature today for an Education Week ceremony to recognize recipients of the Prime Minister's Award for Teaching Excellence.

"These two educators are an example of the high calibre of teachers in this province," said Bond. "The hands-on learning experiences they provided in their classrooms will extend far beyond the borders of the classroom to assist them in achieving success in the future."

Moayeri, currently a doctoral student, researcher and teacher at the University of British Columbia, was recognized for promoting student achievement by encouraging her students to enter contests and competitions and providing them with assistance and coaching. The hands-on learning experiences, such as reconstructing the classroom into a newspaper headquarters, have enhanced her students' educational experience and achievement. Her students' accomplishments include:

- Winning the Vancouver Sun "Create a Classroom Newspaper Contest" three consecutive years.
- Out of 11,000 students, three of her students received individual awards in the "Canada Book Week Contest." Students placed second and third in the book cover portion of the contest, while the third student placed third in the essay portion.
- Four students placed first in the "Exploravision Contest" and appeared in USA Today for inventing a prosthesis to assist throat cancer victims in communication.

With Maryam's coaching, Tracy Hinder placed fifth in Canada and travelled to Washington, D.C. in the Scripps Howard Spelling Bee.

"Maryam Moayeri is a dedicated professional who has found ways to challenge her students using new and integrated methods," said West Vancouver-Garibaldi MLA Joan McIntyre. "And she seems to have created a non-traditional and fun learning environment conducive for students to excel."

"We are proud to have such passionate and innovative teachers as Maryam challenging our students to reach higher levels of achievement," said West Vancouver school board chair Jane Kellett. "Maryam's multi-disciplinary approach, integrating core communication concepts with lessons on tolerance and understanding, bring a deeper, richer learning experience to the classroom."

Ballou, a science teacher at Handsworth secondary school, was recognized for her work as a facilitator for work experience opportunities for students in applied science and her mentorship in technology topics related to science. Ballou thrives on challenging students to think outside the box and strives to show her students emerging ideas and concepts in science.

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"It is educators like Briar Ballou that have a tremendous impact on students' lives," said West Vancouver-Capilano MLA Ralph Sultan. "It is important to recognize the efforts of teachers that contribute so much to their schools. And, I am proud to have Briar teach in my community."

"Briar Ballou is a dedicated teacher whose innovative teaching methods have made a significant contribution to student success in the district," said North Vancouver board chair Chris Dorais. "We are grateful for the talented teachers in our district and very proud of Briar for her accomplishment."

Briar Ballou and Maryam Moayeri are among 14 B.C. educators who received the 2006 Prime Minister's Award for Teaching Excellence. They joined Education Minister Shirley Bond today to honour their achievement as part of Education Week 2007. During Education Week 2008, Premier Gordon Campbell will announce the first-ever recipients of the Premier's Award for Teaching Excellence.

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